

REMARKS

I. Introduction

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the rejections set forth in the Office Action of December 23, 2009 is respectfully requested.

II. Prior Art Rejections

Currently, claims 1, 3-5, 8-10, 14, 17-19, and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being unpatentable over Miyazaki et al. (US 2004/0073814) and claims 2, 6, 7, 11, 15, 16, 20, 21, 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miyazaki et al. in view of Thomsen (US 7,194,004).

Claim 1 is patentable over Miyazaki et al. and Thomsen for the following reasons. Claim 1 requires an access control device for controlling an access from a resource use device to a resource providing device for using a resource provided by the resource providing device, the access control device comprising: a communication unit that directly communicates with the resource use device and the resource providing device; an access permission unit that instructs the resource providing device via the communication unit to permit an access from the resource use device; a storage unit that stores information on the resource use device which has been permitted to access the resource providing device by the access permission unit as management information; an existence check unit that checks a communication state with the resource use device of which the management information is stored in the storage unit, via the communication unit; and an access discard unit that instructs the resource providing device via the communication unit to reject an access from the resource use device, with which communication is determined to be disconnected by the existence check unit.

Miyazaki et al. discloses an access control system for relieving a service provider of the burden of managing personal information. On page 2 of the Office Action, the group administration device (10, herein referred to as GAD) of Miyazaki et al. is asserted as corresponding to the access control device of claim 1, the user device (20) of Miyazaki et al. is asserted as corresponding to the resource use device of claim 1, and the service provider device (30) of Miyazaki et al. is asserted as corresponding to the resource providing device of claim 1. Also, on page 3 of the Office Action, it is asserted that Miyazaki et al. discloses the access permission unit of claim 1 because “the GAD provides the permission information that will be used for the user device and provider device to communicate, Figure 2 ST10.” However, as disclosed in paragraph 0159 of Miyazaki et al., the GAD (10) does not perform step ST10 shown in Figure 2; this function is performed by a component (24) of the user device (20). Because Miyazaki et al. does not disclose an access control device including an access permission unit that instructs the resource providing device via the communication unit to permit an access from the resource use device, Miyazaki et al. cannot meet the requirements of claim 1.

Moreover, on page 3 of the Office Action, it is asserted that the GAD (10) includes the existence check unit of claim 1 because “the information management section of the GAD determine (sic) the eligibility or ineligibility of the user to use the service Figure 10 ST4.” While the Miyazaki et al. reference does not include a figure 10, it is presumed that the Examiner refers to step ST4 shown in figure 2. Miyazaki et al. uses a group signature method to prove that a user device is a member of a group authorized to access a service provider (see paragraph 0021). Accordingly, Miyazaki et al. does not confirm whether or not an electronic device of which the existence thereof cannot be confirmed is included in the electronic devices to which access has been permitted. In other words, Miyazaki et al. does not disclose an existence check unit that

checks a communication state with the resource use device of which the management information is stored in the storage unit, via the communication unit. Step ST4 is merely a step of determining whether information has been created (see paragraph 0151), not an operation of checking a communication state with the resource use device. Because Miyazaki et al. does not disclose an existence check unit that checks a communication state with the resource use device of which the management information is stored in the storage unit, Miyazaki et al. cannot meet the requirements of claim 1.

Further, on page 3 of the Office Action, it is asserted that Miyazaki et al. discloses the access discard unit of claim 1 because “if ineligible the user will not get the proper permission information and will fail the authority proof ST25 for Figure 3.” However, the GAD (10) does not perform step ST25. Instead, the service provider device (30) verifies the validity of the authority proof information in step ST25. (See paragraph 0169). Because Miyazaki et al. does not disclose an access control device including an access discard unit that instructs the resource providing device via the communication unit to reject an access from the resource use device, Miyazaki et al. cannot meet the requirements of claim 1.

On page 4 of the Office Action, it is asserted that the authority verification unit (33) of Miyazaki et al. reference discloses the existence check unit of claim 10. However, the authority verification section (33) merely verifies authority proof information and outputs the verification result. (See paragraph 00169). Because Miyazaki et al. does not disclose an existence check unit that checks a communication state with the access control device via the communication unit, Miyazaki et al. cannot meet the requirements of claim 10. Moreover, because Miyazaki et al. does not disclose the claimed existence check unit, Miyazaki et al. cannot disclose an access rejection unit that rejects an access from the resource use device which has been permitted to

access by the access control device with which communication is determined to be disconnected by the existence check unit. Because Miyazaki et al. does not disclose the claimed access rejection unit, Miyazaki et al. cannot meet the requirements of claim 10.

The Thomsen reference is relied on for alleged disclosures which are unrelated to the above-discussed deficiencies of Miyazaki et al., and Applicants submit that the Thomsen reference also fails to disclose the above-discussed requirements of claims 1 and 10.

Further, it appears as though there would have been no reason to modify any of the prior art of record to yield a configuration which would meet the requirements of claims 1 and 10. It is thus submitted that the invention of the present application, as defined in claims 1 and 10, is not anticipated nor rendered obvious by the prior art, and yields significant advantages over the prior art. Allowance is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-9 and 19-23 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 1 and are thus allowable for at least the reasons set forth above in support of claim 1. Claims 11 and 14-17 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 10 and are thus allowable for at least the reasons set forth above in support of claim 10. Claim 18 requires the limitations discussed above with respect to claims 1 and 10, and thus claim 18 is allowable for at least the reasons set forth above in support of claims 1 and 10.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, inasmuch as all of the outstanding issues have been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and action to such effect is earnestly solicited. Should any issues remain after consideration of the response, however, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the Examiner's convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

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